

REMARKS

Claims 55-61, 76-78 and 82-87 currently stand rejected in view of Naik (6,204,168) under 35 USC 102(e). Claims 79-81 were rejected under 35 USC 103 over Naik in view of Weidman (5,885,751)

Independent Claim 76

Independent claim 76 includes: “converting said insulative layer to an oxide layer through exposure to an oxygen plasma” (wherein the insulative layer had been formed from exposure to electro-magnetic radiation). Naik merely teaches the formation of PPMSO through exposure to UV electro-magnetic radiation. It is respectfully submitted that Naik provides no disclosure as to converting the PPMSO layer that results from UV radiation to an oxide layer through exposure to an oxygen plasma. Naik therefore does not teach the further conversion of the layer through an oxygen plasma.

As such, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 76 and those claims depending therefrom are not anticipated under 35 USC 102 by Naik and are patentably distinct from Naik.

Independent Claims 55, 59 and 84

As amended each of the remaining independent claims also includes a limitation relating to converting an insulative layer to an oxide layer through exposure to an oxygen plasma.

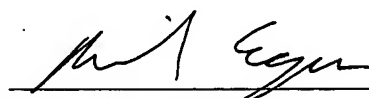
Similar to as described with respect to claim 76, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 55, 59 and 84 (and those claims depending therefrom) are not anticipated under 35 USC 102 by Naik and are patentably distinct from Naik.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully assert that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the phone number indicated below with any questions or comments or to otherwise facilitate expeditious and compact prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard D. Egan", is written over a horizontal line.

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